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## Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

**Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living** 

## Seniors & SNAP: What you need to know

The Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp program) is an important supplement to income for all beneficiaries, but especially for lower income older people and people with disabilities, who often live on fixed budgets that can form them to make difficult trade-offs that affect their health. Research shows that households that receive SNAP are on average, less likely to experience food insecurity. Food insecurity means lacking access to enough nutritious food for a healthy active lifestyle.

Food insecurities are associated with adverse health outcomes in seniors. Food insecure seniors are 50% more likely to be diabetic, 14% are more likely to have high blood pressure, and nearly 60% are more likely to have congestive heart failure or have experienced a heart attack.

Despite the importance of SNAP for seniors health and economic well-being, people over 60 have the lowest SNAP use of all demographic groups.



Some of the most common barriers to seniors participating in SNAP include;

- social isolation
- lack of knowledge about benefits
- confusion about eligibility requirements
- difficulty filling out an application
- stigma surrounding the program

Call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 1-877-925-0037

To get help and guidance with applying for SNAP benefits.

### Some groups of seniors are more affected

Seniors are more likely to be food insecure if they:

- Live in a southern state
- Have a disability: Almost one-third of food insecure seniors are disabled.
- Are younger: Nearly 65% of food insecure seniors are younger than age 69.
- Live with a grandchild: Nearly one in every five seniors living with grandchildren is food insecure.
- Are African American or Hispanic: 17% of African American seniors and 18% of Hispanic seniors are food insecure, compared to 7% of Caucasian seniors.

### SENIORS & SNAP: 5 MYTHS BUSTED: Get help paying for healthy food!

- 1. Myth: SNAP is only for families with Children
  - **FACT:** SNAP is for everyone who qualifies, including seniors. 3 out of 5 seniors who qualify are currently not participating in the program.
- Myth: I'll only get \$15 a month, so it's not worth applying
   FACT: The average national SNAP benefit for senior living alone is \$108 a month.
- 3. Myth: Other people need SNAP more than I do **FACT:** Everyone who enrolls in SNAP will get help. By applying, you are not taking benefits away from others.
- Myth: No stores near me accept SNAP
   FACT: Over 250,000 grocery stores and farmers market accept SNAP to pay for food.
- 5. MYTH: It is too hard to apply for SNAP

  FACT: Depending on where you live, you can apply online, by mail, or in person—and get one-on-one help if you need it.

#### References:

https://www.ncoa.org/news/resources-for-reporters/get-the-facts/senior-hunger-facts/

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http://chfs.ky.gov/dail/default.htm